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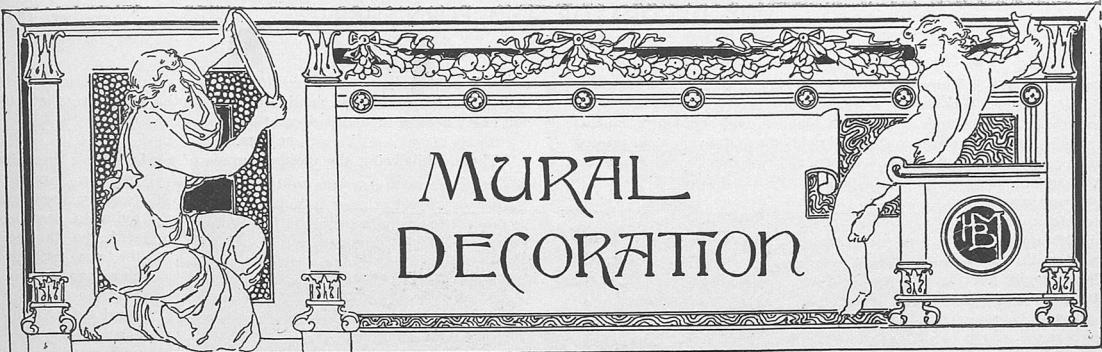
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THE NEW BIRGE WALL-PAPERS.

BY THE EDITOR.



O manufacturer of American wall-papers is doing more to advance decorative art in this particular industry than the firm of M. H. Birge & Sons, of Buffalo. These gentlemen are artists, as well as manufacturers, and in their hands a prosaic roll of blank paper becomes something so splendid, fascinating and original, in combinations of color and design, as to captivate both the senses and understanding. The best designs produced by the firm readily associate themselves with luxurious tastes, self-indulgence and costly living.

Their superb line of hand-made goods have been designed not merely as wall decorations, but to administer to the human craving for beauty, for the supreme aesthetic ideal of the moment, and the multifarious designs exhibited, are based on the fact that beauty is in itself restless and ever changing, because rooted in the infinite.

PRESSED PAPERS.

A pattern consisting of a heraldic lion, the frieze being a repeat of a coat-of-arms of which the lion is a prominent feature, is one of the features of the pressed papers. There is a ceiling to match, and, indeed, every design made by this enterprising firm has a special frieze and ceiling to match. The design is intended for a hall or library, and is printed on variously colored grounds, and the pattern can be had embossed in plain white, for special treatment by the decorator. There is a floral composition representing needle-work embroidery, decorated in bronzes, with the addition of brilliant pounce effects in gleaming metal. Number 5060 is a pressed pattern of enamelled flowers and scrolls, produced in two-tint effects, such as in pale and deep empire green, white and blue, white and green, white and yellow, white and buff, cream and gold, and in plain white for special treatment.

The patterns in pressed leatherettes are chiefly of the heraldic order, with blended friezes leading the ground color of the wall pattern up to the lighter tint of the ceiling. In fact, the entire line of embossed leather papers displays the utmost skill in rivalling the best examples of real leathers. New designs are rapidly coming into existence rivalling in dexterity and beauty the hand-tooled leathers of ancient times. There is a pattern in embossed leather strap-work worked into panels, that would form an admirable dining room decoration. The same pattern is produced in highly glazed effects, representing porcelain tiles. A Colonial figure, arranged as an ogee repeat, has a handsomely blended frieze and ceiling to match.

Then there are Louis XVI. scrolls, whose infinite sumptuousness, decorated in fine contrasted tints of ground and ornament, would make an admirable decoration for parlors and dining rooms. There are set figures for libraries and halls, Roman scrolls, forming panels enclosing set figures, and empire wreaths and festoons all beautifully embossed and executed in warm, brilliant color combinations, that possess those intangible qualities that can only come from long experience and a passion for all that is graceful and elegant in the chemistry of color.

There is a partridge pattern in dark colors and gold, with a finely printed border to match. It comes in green and bronze and in pale green and white, and is particularly noticeable. Concluding the category of pressed papers is a small set figure for stonings, produced in both pressed and watered silk effects. It is a paper that will be found extremely useful to paper-hangers.

TWENTY-TWO INCH SPECIAL GOODS.

The special goods of M. H. Birge & Son are known throughout the trade as possessing a profound sentiment of beauty, especially as regards color, with an almost Oriental predilection for its strongest harmonies and most intricate designs and combinations. The patterns in their lines of special goods are produced in a series of different ground treatments, each adding a new splendor to what will have been thought the very perfection of design.

A design of bouquets and scrolls outlined in gold with a blue ground is singularly effective. The same design is reproduced in deep intense leather colors, and again on a linen embossing, the ground being dusted with bronze to simulate the effect of a cloth of gold. Then again the pattern is produced in enamelled effects, exhibiting a rich sheen like a mirror, possessing great clearness and depth of color. In other cases the ground has been embossed in floral lace effects or in imitation of watered silk, giving the most brilliant effects, making the paper a fit environment for the varied gallantries of social and domestic life.

A deep, dark-blue moiré silk pattern, showing the texture of a sumptuous brocade, the embossing having been executed by a steel roller, imparting great sharpness and beauty to the design, has printed thereon a simple repeat of empire motives in greenish cream. There is also a greenish cream festoon and wreaths on the dark-blue frieze, while the greenish cream ceiling is decorated with interwoven circles of minute blue floral stars. All of the patterns in this brilliant category are characterized by an aesthetic picturesqueness, that must be seen to be appreciated.

Number 2254 is an exceptionally handsome rose pattern, magnificient as is the natural flower. It is the American Beauty rose, printed in highly modelled relief, in pink, yellow and other colors, on the sweetest and choicest of softly colored grounds. The pattern of pink on pink, pink on lavender, and pink on deep blue, is one that harmonizes most gracefully and completely with the happiest aspects of humanity. The same brilliant design is produced on burlap, enamelled and watered silk effects. The frieze is a tracery of roses growing out of rococo scrolls.

Number 2284 is an Empire torch, ribbon and flower effect, the pattern being powdered at intervals, with bright gleams of bronze, representing the powdered gleams of sunshine that find their way through thick overarching leaves. There is a feeling of summer in this unique device, which imparts great cheerfulness and beauty to the entire conception. Number 2278 is one of those floral conceptions in the two-tone effects, produced on an enamelled ground, for the decoration of apartments finished in enamelled wood-work. One of the most artistically designed patterns we have ever seen is that of a dragon outlined in gold, poised on a shirt of mail, the remaining part of the pattern being a magnificently flowing scroll, somewhat Romanesque in its arrangement. In many cases the outlines are filled with a color complementary to that of the ground, in some cases the pattern being emblazoned in blended gold. A combination of white and green is startling in its contrast. This fine decoration possesses a poetic, romantic atmosphere, that would make it a most fitting decoration for a hall or library.

Passing over the line of tapestry papers, which are too well-known to need special description, we come to a line of most artistically colored papers in which empire ornament plays a most prominent part. An Empire striped pattern, with a magnificently conceived frieze, containing three different borders, is colored with great brilliancy and effect. There is a joyous, triumphant feeling in the motives employed, the pattern more nearly resembling a piece of finely colored marquetry than a pattern of wall paper. The colors on which pink and green predominate are very artistic, full of strong vibrant harmonies, and are a great improvement on the taste and beauty displayed by the

Romans in the brighter phases of Pompeian art. Another beautiful Empire pattern consists of a golden lyre encircled with a golden wreath, printed on cloth of gold, flat blended, and enamelled finished ground. Empire patterns in stamped gold effects are very rich, printed on grounds of maroon, Havana brown, rich green and green bronze. A customer, with a strong predilection for color, has his library decorated with one of these Empire gold stamped papers, on a ground of sealing wax red. Such a pattern is well calculated to satisfy a supreme human craving for gorgeousness of effect.

Of a kind with the heraldic pattern above referred to, is a bright conception in the Japanese style of finely drawn fish and balls, sporting amidst storm tossed waves. The design springs from a jubilant fancy, and worked upon ingrain in reds, blues and greens, is at once quaint, delicate, lithe and beautiful. The frieze has the addition of a fish net whose golden meshes enclose the leaping fish. There is a book of plain colored walls to match the friezes of any of the papers above referred to. Among newer colorings are soft maroon, robin's egg blue, sage, apple and Empire greens, greenish yellow, Empire yellow and pink, on grounds of enamel, canvas and lace embossing and pebble leather effects. There is also a line of ingrain with friezes decorated with patterns in stippled relief, with or without the accompaniment of gold and silver flitter. There is an extensive section of striped papers wrought in beautiful changes of color and terminating with crown

effect in the frieze. Some of these are of the gold stamped variety, having two stripes in one, with or without floral ornaments.

MACHINE MADE PAPERS.

While the effects in the machine made goods, are not so elaborate

or costly as their hand-made productions, yet no one possessed of true artistic taste, can examine the line without finding something that will suit every need of moderate decoration.

BLANKS.

These, while being the cheapest grade of goods, possess throughout, an artistic, pleasing character, quite in keeping with the fame of the house for high-class productions.

There are choice floral combinations, enriched with touches of mica, that are eagerly sought after by dealers and customers in search of dainty decorations at the lowest price. Many of the patterns are reproductions of the Dresden and chintz effects, many of them printed in two-tone colors, strong pinks and blues being predominant. A bouquet of flowers through which is thrust a crescent in mica, is a dainty repeat, and a very sweet pattern is a reproduction of a bouquet of cyclamens. All of these papers have two-band borders for friezes, with ceilings to match, the patterns receiving in each case as many as eight different schemes of color. The profuse floral effects are relieved by patterns of Moorish arabesques, in color and mica, the frieze and ceiling forming, with the wall-paper in each case, well considered and attractive schemes of decoration. Other geometrical effects prevail, and these are followed by a series of very pretty striped papers, in which are incorporated floral set figures, many of them containing from eight to ten colors.

Glimmers.

The new line of Glimmer goods is largely interested in floral patterns arranged in the forms of all-over repeats or combinations of stripes and flowers. A very choice paper has sprays of carnations set upon the stripes at regular intervals. There are some very broad



INTERIOR DECORATED WITH M. H. BIRGE & SONS' WALL-PAPER.

stripped patterns in alterations of glimmer and color, a stripe in rich yellow glimmer being conspicuously attractive. Nasturtium and the sweet pea are other charming motives in the glimmer line of goods.

SCINTILLARES.

If the appetite of the reader has been surfeited with the luxurions profusion of the goods already described, it remains for the scintillare goods to whet the jaded feeling with their unexpected revelations of beauty. These papers are emblazoned with delightful patterns in lustrous yellow and lustrous peach-colored scintillare, whose brilliancy can only be compared to the irridescence of mother of pearl, or the deep gleaming hues on the burnished backs of tropical insects. Stencilled effects predominate, with finely-interwoven borders, and a design in blue and silver exhibits a perfect refinement of substance and taste.

EMBOSSED GOODS.

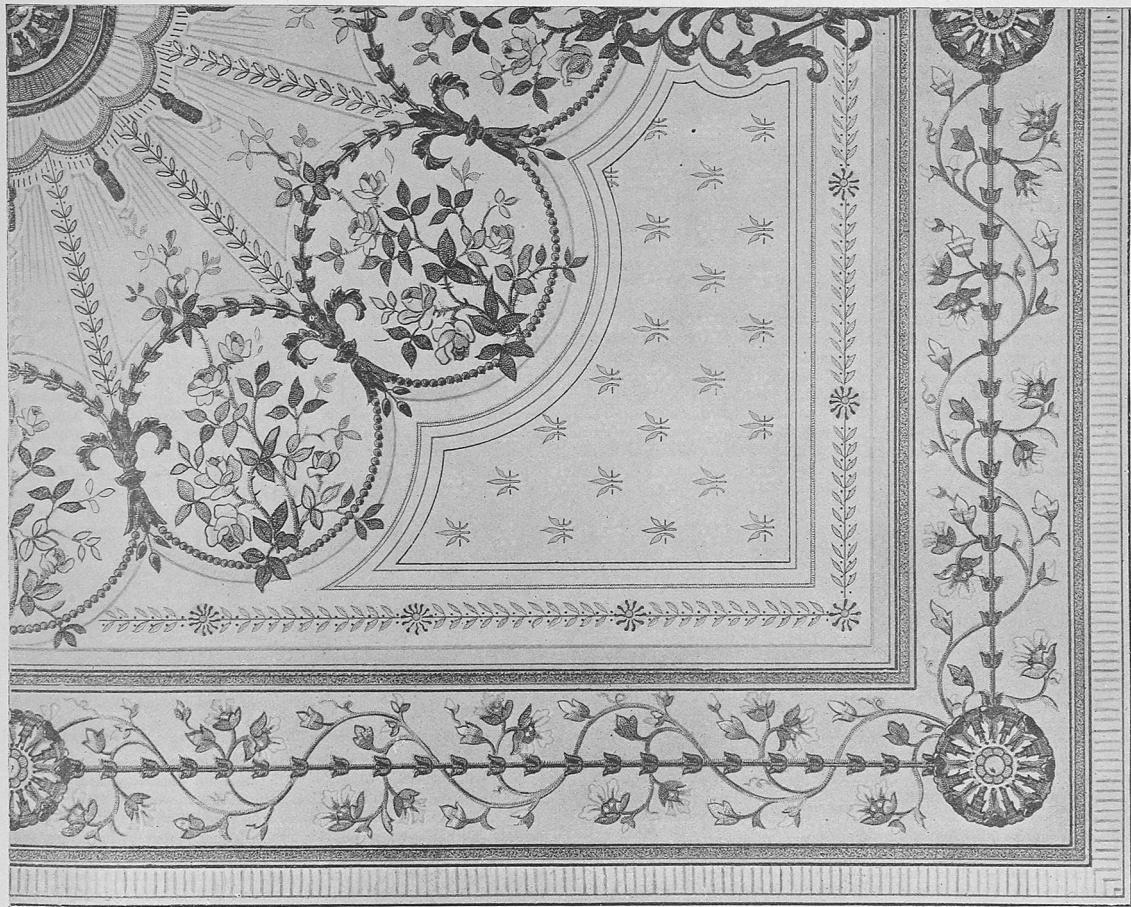
All the varied styles of embossing distributed throughout the entire line of goods are here concentrated on their line of machine-made embossed fabrics. There is the beautiful Brussels lace embossing, colored in a delicate old rose tint, which, with the accompaniment of mica, inwrought with the color, makes the delightful nasturtium pattern printed thereon resemble a combination of lace and silk brocade. Then there is the repp finish which, when applied to their striped patterns, recalls the dainty qualities of Eighteenth century silken fabrics. There are violets and lilies printed on canvas grounds that look like roughly-woven silk. Empire effects are reproduced on leather grained grounds, and chrysanthemums on grounds of a linen finish as regards color and texture. Tapestry effects are printed on grounds of cloth of gold, and in other cases the effects are lithographic, resonant with subtle harmonies of color.

THE ROBERT GRAVES COMPANY'S NEW WALL PAPERS.



OWEVER much the various members of the National Wall Paper Company may sink their individuality for commercial reasons, the principal firms who make a specialty of high class wall papers must continue to become keen competitors, as artists engaged in the development of American decorative art. Certainly if the wall paper art is to keep pace with the development of textile fabric and other decorative materials, the manufacturers must continue to exert their energies, to create productions that will appeal to the artistic sense, producing those combinations of the poetic, or inventive faculty, with the scientific or technical, which go to the making of a work of art.

The well-known firm of The Robert Graves Company, is one of the select few of the American firms, that has obtained a commanding superiority in the production of elaborate and technically fine decorations. A certain sumptuousness of line and richness of color, place their goods above the level of the commonplace, and their achievements for the present season display sterling qualities of design and



CEILING DESIGN IN WALL PAPER. BY THE ROBERT GRAVES CO., NEW YORK.